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HERALD OF GOSPEL LIBERTY.

By ELIAS SMITH.

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PORTSMOUTH, FRIDAY, MAY 27, 1814.

WHOLE No. 150.

"Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded."—*Jeremiah.*

A Speech supposed to be made by the Bible.

From the days of Constantine, emperor of Rome, down to the present time, my character in Europe has been held in high estimation. Indeed, I have been acknowledged by all to be the only true teacher of religion. Notwithstanding this complaisance, the treatment I have received from many, has been worse than unpolite. People of opposite sentiments, have not only whispered among their own circles, but proclaimed to the world that I supported them both. Such double conduct I detest; but as few, comparatively, consulted me, many adopted all the false and ruinous tenets propagated in my name.

The Roman pontiff acquired excessive temporal power by gradual encroachments. He and his associates formed as they said, a religion founded on my instructions; and sent out emissaries, in all directions, to impel men, by fire and faggot, to confess their inventions to be my truth.

As I had portrayed this ecclesiastical monster with great accuracy, & warned the world of his approach, they soon viewed me with a jealous eye. At length I was laid under the severest restrictions, being enjoined never to address any people in the language they understood. As no nation spake *Latin* after the overthrow of the Roman empire by the northern barbarians, they assigned me that language. However, they would not have been highly displeased, though I had spoken *French* in Holland, and *Dutch* in France.

Finding that even this barbarity did not wholly prevent me from teaching truth to the nations, they laid me under an *embargo*, till they had made such incisions and alterations upon my tongue, that I could hardly utter a sentence intelligibly. Indeed, they pared my tongue with such ingenuity, that, in spite of myself, I appeared to speak in favour of superstition and absurdity. For example, when I attempted to say, "*Jacob worshipped leaning upon the top*

of his staff," it always sounded to the hearers, as if I said, "*Jacob worshipped the top of his staff*," which made many suppose there had been an image of Enoch carved on the top, to which he paid religious honor. But as I had always been accustomed to give a distinct and certain sound, many perceived the wounds I had received in the house of my pretended friends, and likewise the effect it had on my articulation. The moment they perceived it, they condemned the cruelty and knavery of Rome; but these, my advocates, were silenced by a rod of iron, the old way of answering arguments. In a few ages, men lost the remembrance of my fair character; and Rome had the effrontery to assure the world I was become such a *mystic*, that no mortal but herself could understand what I said; and falsely asserted I had appointed her my sole and infallible interpreter. The world believed her, and tamely surrendered their right of judging for themselves.

In consequence of all this malice, sophistry, and treachery, I walked in the world, prophesying in sackcloth and chains: and no man dared to express a desire for my liberation. However, even in the darkest ages of Roman tyranny and superstition, I had a few familiar friends, whom God taught to understand me, and influenced to believe and love my ancient testimony. These continually cried to God to dispel the cloud with which I was covered, that I might illumine the world, as in primitive times. The prayers of these friends came up before God in an accepted time. He heard and sent deliverance, by exposing the deceit and absurdity of the antichristian hierarchy. Luther and others were enlightened to discern my truth and purity; and obtained courage to publish the discovery. They inveighed against my captivity, and detailed the barbarous treatment I had experienced during its continuance; how cruelly they had increased my tor-

ture, year after year; how frequently they had published lies in my name.

Multitudes were shocked at the conduct of Rome by this exposure, and would no more acknowledge her to be their teacher. They said they had eyes and ears as well as the *Conclave*; wherefore, in matters of everlasting moment, they would not trust to those of others. My friends then applied ointment to my wounds; by which means they were soon healed; and all the bad matter with which I had been *inoculated*, was extracted; so that I travelled about with my pristine health and vigour. Thus was my age renewed as the eagle's, and I promoted the health and happiness of many countries. Rome raged because I was liberated, and laid many a snare to renew my captivity; but without success. To be sure many of my admirers suffered for their friendship; but they died rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer in such a cause.

My peregrinations became so rapid and extensive, that Rome could not follow me. At length she began to tremble, lest I should remove her from her seat. Upon this she cried for help to all her friends and flatterers. One of the *Henrys*, King of England, wrote a little in her favour; she styled him *defender*; and declared that his sons, to the very latest posterity might assume the same honorable title, even though they should never put pen to paper in her favour; so much did she consider herself obliged to this foreigner. However, in a few years this very Henry began to turn against her, and laugh at her folly; and then renounced all connections with her. Being condemned to die a lingering death, she has long been in a declining state.

At present, many of my friends who have had peculiar happiness in my company, and who have been taught my real worth, are liberally subscribing, for the purpose of sending me on a mission to many countries, which are as foreign

to me as I am to them. These friends know, that when I am sent in my native simplicity, I never give an uncertain sound; but teach in all places the same truth I taught them. I am also the cheapest missionary they can send; I require nothing to pay for bed and board. I say more than any man about God and godliness, & preach as willingly at midnight as midday, and with the same pleasure to one as to a thousand; to a slave as to a sovereign; nor do I fear the face of man.

My travels are the travels of truth, where I am known, there is no night; clouds and darkness flee before me. I shall persevere in my mission to man, till all shall know me from the least unto the greatest; till the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the channel of the sea. Those who assist in bringing me forward on my journey, after a godly sort, shall do well. My God shall supply all their needs, according to his glorious riches, by Christ Jesus.

For the Herald.

To Elder Stephen Gano, Pastor of the first Baptist Church in Providence.

Dear Sir,

I can truly say I am sorry there exists an occasion of the present address. Although I appear first in this publick way, yet you must take to yourself the responsibility of the aggression. You was invited of late to solemnize a funeral in this place. The occasion called together the friends and acquaintance of the deceased, of all descriptions of religious sentiments. Such an occasion, one would think, could not be looked upon, in any consideration, as a forum of impassioned disputation and party attack. You must have been obliged therefore to do violence to your own feelings as well as to the authority of your text, when you captiously came out and opened your battery, masked by the solemn occasion, upon a harmless and numerous people you called "socinians." The malignancy of the attack was more observable, by all correct judges, than the efficiency of its prosecution. You gave but indifferent proofs of your capacity and preparation to manage the controversy. Though the numerous people, who humbly call themselves christians, are wholly undisguis-

ed in their sentiments, yet you appeared to have a very imperfect view of them: while also in calling them *Socinians* you discovered a great mistake of what a Socinian was. In all this, Sir, you cannot be adjudged blameless. Both your friends and those you have made your antagonists have a right to require of you not to present yourself a champion of the controversy, without being acquainted, in some good degree, with the following particulars.

1. The sentiments of the people called *christians*.

2. The sentiments of those who admit the appellation of Socinians, and

3. With the BIBLE which is zealously sought unto as the common oracle of us all.

In each of these you manifested such want of information as offended both the good understanding and feelings of your orthodox friends.

The limits of this paper will not permit me to enter into a disquisition on these particular points. Having much friendship and sympathy for you as a christian, we could have hoped you would thus have prepared yourself before you ascended the desk for so publick an attack.

You indeed had made choice of a very appropriate text for the occasion. "For if we believe that Jesus died & arose again, even so then also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The advocates of the apostles creed—one God & one mediator, would have chosen this text as soon as any, for their own defence. It presented you with the mediator, who died and was raised again by the glory of the Father. It presented you also (as plain as words could express) with the assurance that those who slept in true faith of this, God would bring with Jesus. You have not forgotten, I think, the positive declaration you made of the view you entertained of the import of the word God in your text. You said it was "God's eternal Son!"—And for proof (of which you stood in need) you prest to your aid the testimony of Jesus himself, who said he should come (in the last day) "in the glory of his Father", which very testimony betrayed you and declared for your antagonists. Shall I remind you of the dilemma into which you was

thrown, when you inculcated the belief in Jesus as one who died and rose again, and that this Jesus was God! and how you then was obliged to betake yourself to prevent the conclusion that God could die; which you declared, notwithstanding, was not your belief. Shall I remonstrate against the ignorant or wilful error you committed when you proclaimed to a thousand people that the christians look upon the great Messiah only as a "mere man!" when you well knew or (judging from your profession) ought to have known that we rejoice to exalt him higher than angels, the first born of every creature, and in all things having the preeminence. We do not think it easy for you to find excuse for this palpable misrepresentation, when many, of this ancient name, have publicly and from house to house, preached the gospel as they viewed it, all around you; unequivocally declaring what they believed to be contained in the scriptures; when also from their preaching, the greatest reformation followed that has taken place for many years in Providence: and you cannot, sir, deny the work to be genuine and evangelic, since you and your sectarian friends have practised means unworthy your profession to seduce the tender minds into the concision of your "faith and order." By all this, you and your party friends have in the view of thousands not only of humble christians but of the reflecting part of the world, personated the conduct of the shrine-smiths at Ephesus. Hereby you become the forlorn betrayers of your own cause, for we perceive you often ascend, in your discourses, on the fable wings of Icarus, exulting in the safety and sublimity of your flight, but rising into the light of the scriptures, the region of truth, your wax-sealed wings of error melt and you are precipitated into the sea of perplexity as you did at Bristol. Dear sir, I should not have given my pen such freedom, had not the instance at the late funeral been one of many, in which you and some of your friends have lately come to this place and having asylumed yourself in the sanctuary of the pulpit, your hearers under duress in silence, you have taken occasion to accuse people who humbly call themselves christians, of denying

Christ. Most assuredly a repetition of such mistakes as these will not admit of the plea of unintentional error. We would at all times decline useless and bitter disputation but never shrink from occasional dispassionate controversy. We hope the time will soon arrive, when false and untenable positions in religion will no longer wear the cloak of *orthodoxy*, and bigotry be stripped of the mask of piety and virtue.

APOLLOS.

A Clergyman's address to married persons at the altar.

The duties between man and wife are various and important. They suppose the union not of *persons* only, but also and principally of *affections*. It is not joining of *hands*, but of *hearts*, which constitutes marriage in the sight of God. This alone brings and preserves the sexes together, and both sanctifies and perfects this most solemn and sacred connection. But where this is wanting, the mere cohabitation of man and woman, in spite of all the ceremonies in the world, is nothing better than a legal prostitution. The office says, and with great propriety, that, so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's word doth allow, are not joined together of God, neither is the matrimony lawful.

See, then, that no motives of interest or convenience deceive you into a notion that you love one another, while you do not. It is not the bare form of vowing in the most solemn manner at the altar, that can possibly give a sanction to falsehood, or render innocent such mercenary lies.

Trifle not, I charge you, in this awful instance, with the God of *nature*, *truth*, and your own *hearts*, and your own comfort! Surely of all kinds and degrees of prostitution, that which screens itself under cover of the law, is the most criminal; and she who gives her hand to the man whom she does not in fact prefer to the whole world, is almost as worthless to all intents and purposes as a common prostitute. God never winks at the violation of nature, nor suffers it to take place with impunity. But this must be the case in every marriage where mutual attachment is

wanting. And that family is uniformly cursed with the most substantial wretchedness, where there subsists no love between the heads of it.

You, who are the *husband*, must treat your wife with delicacy and tenderness. Nothing in nature is so *endearing*, so *winning*, so *captivating*, as tenderness; nothing creates aversion so soon, so strong, so inveterate, as rudeness, indifference, or disrespect. She is the weaker vessel and depends on you for protection and comfort in all her difficulties. For *your sake* she has left her friends, her connections and all the world; and should she meet with a tyrant instead of a lover, she may repent of this day as long as she lives. Never incense nor insult her; and as you wish to keep your own temper and peace, ruffle not her's; for crossness and asperity, especially when they settle into moroseness, and ill nature, are the qualities of a savage, not of a christian. Never, on any pretence whatever, squander that in dress, drinking, or dissipation, which you should lay by for the benefit of your family. By all the laws of God and man, of justice and love, they have an exclusive claim on whatsoever you can earn, and every unnecessary indulgence which you take apart from them, is at their expence and injury. Consult your wife, especially in all cases of difficulty; 'tis her *interest* as well as *duty* to give you the best advice she can. Never keep her ignorant of your circumstances; this has been the undoing of millions of families. The wife who deserves the name, will *never fail to economize*, when she knows that her partner's circumstances require it. Be not much uneasy though the world should sometimes think she has her full share of influence. Women of good sense seldom abuse their husband's confidence. And you will see few happy families in which the wife is either a slave or a cypher.

Mutual happiness is your mutual object; yield therefore to one another,—*Be ye equally yoked*, is the command of God; but neither seek basely to throw an undue weight on the other's shoulders. Suffer no *interference* from any quarter to interrupt your harmony; you are connected for life.—Nothing can separate your lot in this world;

O let nothing divide your affections. Regard each other with the fullest confidence; the least spark of suspicion from either, must forever blast the comfort of both. There can be no harmony where there is no faith.

A wife should not only love her husband, but on every occasion shew him all the attention in her power. Study by every means to make his home comfortable and inviting. *Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also*, and a man's presence, as well as *his heart*, will always be there most, where he has most pleasure. And I will venture to assert it as a fact incontestible, that he who finds his home a *paradise*, will seldom stroll into the wilderness of the world. While on the other hand, a scolding wife and a hot house have driven may a wretched husband to a tavern, where cards, women, and wine, have sealed his own and the *destruction of his family*.

In a word, be habitually loving and kind to one another. Have no separate secrets, nor allow yourselves any airs of mystery; but open out your whole hearts to each other. Conceal as much as possible each others foibles, and cultivate habits of affability, forbearance and good nature. Never be sullen or in a pet with each other, especially in the presence of strangers. And to say all in all, love and live together as the heirs of glory, and may the richest blessings of Almighty God be your mutual portion both in this world and the next.

The Lawyer, Witness & Clergyman.

[The following is from a work lately published by NOAH WORCESTER of Salisbury, N. H. entitled—"An appeal to the candid, or the Trinitarian review"—A work worthy the attention of the candid.]

A Lawyer in writing a deposition, introduced some words in a "*mysterious sense*," which rendered one of the sentences perfectly unintelligible to the witness. On reading the form, the witness exclaimed, "Sir, I do not understand that sentence!" "Neither do I," said the lawyer, but all *good witnesses* testify in this manner; and you must do so too, or your testimony will not be received." The witness supposing it to be safe to follow the *good*, was

persuaded to subscribe, and swear to the whole. When the deposition was read in court, the witness happened to be present. The attorney on the other side suspected some fraud, and requested liberty to question the witness. On being closely questioned, the witness owned that he did not understand that mysterious sentence, when he swore to the truth of it. The attorney then endeavoured to set aside the whole deposition, pleading "that the testimony of a man who would swear to the truth of a proposition, while he did not understand the meaning of the terms, ought not to be admitted in any court of Justice;" and added, "that the witness ought to be indicted for perjury."

But the judge being of a discerning and compassionate character, perceived, as he thought, marks of honesty in the witness, and suspected improper management on the part of the lawyer who wrote the deposition. On enquiry he found that it was by the art and influence of the lawyer, that the witness had been brought into such an unpleasant situation. He admitted so much of the deposition as the witness appeared to understand, but severely reprimanded the lawyer for the wicked and disgraceful part he had acted.

In a short time the affair was reported, and the witness reproached. He happened to be a member of a church, under the care of a *trinitarian* clergyman, and the lawyer was a resident in the same parish. The minister being informed of the circumstances, felt wounded, and reproved the lawyer. The lawyer replied in a mild but firm tone of voice, "Sir, is it only in the solemn affairs of religion, that you allow your church members to trifle with God, with truth, and with conscience? I have but followed your example. You first seduced the witness yourself, by leading him to subscribe an article of faith, in which a term was used in "a mysterious sense," the very thing, for which you have reproved me. I did it to open your eyes, to the astonishing, but unregarded impropriety of your own practice. But once have I been guilty of such behaviour, can you, sir, say the same?"

This illustration may suggest to christians the danger of subscribing an

article of faith, or saying that they believe it, while the very words are used in "a mysterious sense." It may also suggest to ministers the shocking impropriety on their part, in leading christians to conduct in a manner so inconsistent with every principle of civil decorum, and gospel simplicity. Suppose Mr. T. A. to be the minister to whom the lawyer replied; if he were not past feeling, must he not have been shocked and confounded? While I sincerely lament my own improprieties which these remarks could not fail to bring to remembrance, I would, were it possible, sound an alarm through christendom, to awaken the attention of my fellow christians, to the enormity of a custom, by which millions have been seduced; a custom which, if generally prevalent in other cases, would render human testimony perfectly nugatory; sap the foundations of justice in legal proceedings; destroy confidence between man and man; loose the bands of society; and fill the world with collusion, uproar and violence.

On one account it is perhaps a favorable circumstance, that I was once a *trinitarian*. From my own experience I am able to account for the extraordinary conduct, I have attempted to expose, without imputing to my *trinitarian* brethren intentional wrong. But I am not able to free either myself or them from the charge of having acted without due consideration, under the pernicious influence of custom and prejudice. For the honor of the christian name, as well as from regard to truth and propriety, it is hoped, that in future, the *clergy* will be more cautious, both in giving and taking *depositions of faith*; and that no one will imagine, that less care is needful in this case, than in giving and taking *depositions of a civil nature*. All christians should view themselves, as witnesses for God, and ever remember that he is of purer eyes, than to be pleased with the mere utterance of words, without knowledge or meaning; or by our using terms in a sense unknown to ourselves.

Three Questions.

Bernad's three questions are worthy the asking ourselves in any enterprise,

1. Is it lawful? May I do it and not

sin? 2. Is it becoming me as a christian? May I do it, and not wrong my profession? 3. Is it expedient? May I do it and not offend my weak brother?

The Christian Hero.

"Midst Alexander's hosts was found,
A coward with the hero's name;
An Alexander but in sound,
He never won a warrior's fame."
"Fight well, or else my name disown,"
The Macedonian hero cries;
"By noblest valor make it known,
An Alexander never flies."
"Their Captain's name thus christians bear;
His soldiers too should seek for fame;
Then boldly wage Faith's glorious war,
Or never boast the Christian's name."

On a rambling preacher, who laid his bible behind him as soon as he had read his text.

"When Ralph has read his text,
You'll see it if you mind him,
He shuts his bible up,
And lays it down behind him.

No wonder, Spintext cries,
He'll do as well without it,
For when his text is read,
He'll say no more about it.

On a preacher who said he never studied his discourses.

Peter so often tells his friends,
That they must needs believe it;
His sermon comes into his mind,
All fresh as they receive it.

Poor man! I'd have him save his breath,
And tell him so sincerely;
That he ne'er studies we're convinced,
His preaching proves it clearly.

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